

THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

66TH STREET AND YORK AVENUE  
NEW YORK 21, N.Y.

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Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
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Univ. of Wisconsin  
MADison 6, Wis.

Dear Josh:

First, with respect to the Boston and Baltimore Symposia-- as already expressed to Zinder, I think it will be appropriate to take up the question of DNA, TP and FA at Baltimore. It seems somewhat removed from phosphate metabolism, but the actual symposium is more broad than its title, and I know from last year that the people who will come will have the far-ranging interest that includes genetics. As to Ed Tatum's program in Boston, I feel that the two hours allotted for four big subjects, presented by a dozen people ~~xx~~ to a general audience is not enough to go very far into the frontiers of any of the subjects. It is not quite clear to me how far we can even get on the subdivision of bacterial transformations. So I would suggest that you try to get past the question of nature of transforming agents by letting the Salmonella and Pneumococcus agents come up primarily as individual cases, where the characters transferred are the main topic. Let me know if this is in accord with your intentions.

Second, as to Norton Zinder: I did not feel free to encourage him about a place in my lab when I first wrote him about Schneider; and even now I do not want to try to sell him on my lab so much that it keeps him from considering all other opportunities he may have. That much being said, I now add that I think it ~~it~~ would be a fine idea, and would like very much to bring it about. Today I confirmed that I can definitely offer a position with me. Now I would like to be sure that this idea has your approval before trying to make definite proposals for having him interviewed etc., and before I make proposals to another candidate that has appeared. Do you feel willing to have Zinder leave you just now, would you want him to bring Salmonella transduction with him or not to bring it, etc. From my point of view, I am naturally more interested in pneumococcal work than in this species, but I can see that one of the next problems is to try to see what is common to these two systems. One of the two, or perhaps some other one, will presumably furnish the optimum system for chemical investigation. I don't think I am unusually stubborn, or evangelistic either, if I say that I still think you will find DNA hidden away in your FA preparations before you get through. Because I will add after saying that, that I think your recent observations with Zinder on Salmonella factors furnish the first fresh viewpoints on this question in many a month. Anyway, you can see that there are logical reasons why Zinder and I should find it fruitful to make some joint efforts. He can presumably become an Assistant (i.e. Instructor level) of this Institute, salary to be determined later with the Director, working in our own two chemical-bacteriological rooms, along with me, two technicians, and for part of the year, a post-grad. fellow.

With best regards to you, and your wife. Sincerely

Rollin Hotchkiss